



02nd September 2026

Dear Councillor,

I Hereby Summon You to attend a **Meeting of Ferryhill Town Council** at 6.00pm on **Wednesday, 9th September 2026**, which will be held at **Ferryhill Town Hall, Chapel Terrace, Ferryhill, Co Durham, DL17 8JL**

Elizabeth Gildersleeves
Acting Town Clerk

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
To invite members to declare any interest they may have.
- 3. Members' Dispensation**
To consider written requests for dispensations from members who have declared interests under Disclosable or Non-Disclosable Pecuniary Interests – Section 33 of the 2011 Localism Act.
- 4. Public Participation (Subject to Public Participation Policy)**
Members of the public are permitted to make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Questions will not be received by the Council which are in furtherance of a person's individual circumstances or which are about a matter where there is a right of appeal to the courts, a tribunal or government minister. A question will not be received by the Council where the issue it concerns has been the subject of a decision of the Council in the last six months.
- 5. Resignation of Councillor**
To note the resignation of Angus Ferguson as Councillor with effect from 28th August 2026. Durham County Council's Electoral Services has been notified and the process to advertise the Councillor vacancy has begun.
- 6. Minutes**
To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of:-
 - a. Full Council held on 29th July 2026



7. Review of Council's Planting Scheme

To consider the attached report

8. Vehicle Usage

To consider the attached report

9. Exclusion of Press and Public

Members are requested to move the following motion:

"That in accordance with the provision of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do now exclude the public and press for the remaining items on the Agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to public interest."

10. Members Initiative Fund Applications

To consider the attached report

11. Acting up arrangements

To consider the attached report

12. Confidential Correspondence Received

A verbal report will be given at the meeting

13. Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of:-

- a. Disciplinary & Grievance Appeals Committee held on 12th August 2026

REPORT: Review of Council's Planting Scheme

AUTHOR: Neighbourhood Manager

COMMITTEE: Full Council

DATE: 9th September 2026

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present Members with information in relation to the provision of Council flowerbeds and planters, consider any current issues or concerns and highlight some possible options for future changes to this service in order to reduce the budget, commencing in 2027/2028, including the option of sustainable perennial planting.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The two-year bedding contract with Windlestone Nursery will end after this year's winter bedding plants are delivered.
- 2.2 The current year budget for Plants and Seeds is £15,500 and if the planting scheme remains the same as currently, it is anticipated that the cost in 2027/28 will be in the region of £17,000.
- 2.3 The Town Council currently has flowerbeds/hanging baskets in the following locations:

Town Hall Garden	Various beds & 22 hanging baskets
Dean Bank Park	4 large flowerbeds
Dean Road	3 flowerbeds
Darlington Road	1 flowerbed
Durham Road	1 flowerbed
Wood Lane	1 flowerbed
Chapel Corner	1 raised bed
Manor Farm	2 large raised beds
Mainsforth Sports Complex	5 flowerbeds
Duncombe Cemetery	7 flowerbeds
King George Recreation Ground	1 flowerbed by the gate

The Town Council has planters in the following locations-

Chilton Lane	1 planter
Beacon of Europe/opposite Chapel	3 large planters
Alongside Town Hall	3 planters and 1 pit tub
Near Meikles Solicitors	1 planter
In front of Peter Clark estate agents	2 planters
Pine Road, by bus shelter	2 small planters, planted by us, tended to by residents
Broom Road	2 large planters
Station Bank, Mainsforth Sports Complex, Dean Bank Park	Pit tubs
Alongside marketplace/bus shelters	3 planters

- 2.4 These beds have always been planted with traditional annual bedding plants and changed between summer and winter bedding planting schemes, with bulbs planted for the winter season. Many of the beds are very substantial in size and take considerable maintenance, particularly during very hot drought conditions that are becoming more regular.

3.0 PROPOSED CHANGES

- 3.1 There are currently two flowerbeds on land not owned or maintained by the council, these are on Wood Lane and Durham Road and it is proposed that we grass seed these beds.

It is also proposed to remove the 3 large planters from the area in front of the church, as this is not land the council owns.

- 3.2 It is proposed that the following changes are made to the planting scheme:

Winter/Summer bedding plants	Perennial/shrub planting
Duncombe Cemetery	Dean Bank Park
Town Hall Garden	Manor Farm
Chapel Corner	Broom Road Planters
Darlington Road	King George Recreation Ground
Dean Road	Mainsforth Sports Complex
All remaining planters/pit tubs	

- 3.3 The flowerbeds earmarked for perennial planting (listed above) have been measured and priced up working on the assumption of 7 plants per square metre. For a range of perennial plants and shrubs including Dianthus, Heuchera, Delphinium, Verbena, Echinacea, and Hosta, amongst others, depending on the plants best suited for the different beds, it is estimated that an amount of approximately £8,800 would need to be spent on perennial planting.

- 3.4 In theory, after the initial cost outlay, whilst there will be an annual cost saving in the purchase of bedding plants, it should be noted that perennials and shrubs will also need ongoing maintenance and watering over the summer, with some plants possibly needing to be replaced in the earlier years or in the event of exposure to extreme weather conditions. However, once established, they should last for many years.
- 3.5 The cost of planting winter and summer bedding in the remaining flowerbeds & planters (listed above) with the same annual bedding plants, as in previous years, to include a mix of geraniums and begonias in summer, and pansies, polyanthus and bellis in winter, is estimated to be £11,500.
- 3.6 Spring bulbs are also currently purchased for the flowerbeds at an annual cost of approximately £750.
- 3.7 If the suggested changes were made, then the estimated total cost for the 2027/2028 planting scheme (bedding plants, perennials/shrubs and bulbs) would be approximately £21,050 and the increase would have to be included when the council's budget for 2027/28 is set.
- 3.8 After the initial additional outlay in purchasing perennials/shrubs in 2027/28, in future years the estimated cost could be reduced to approximately £12,300 to purchase bedding plants & bulbs only, not allowing for the provision of any replacement perennials or inflationary increases.
- 3.9 The order for winter/summer bedding plants must be placed by the beginning of November, therefore formal quotes must be sought and brought back to Council for consideration in October.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That Members consider the attached report and decide on a planting scheme for future years, commencing in 2027/2028. Quotes for plants can then be sought and brought back to Council for Members' consideration in October.

REPORT: Vehicle Usage

AUTHOR: Neighbourhood Manager

COMMITTEE: Full Council

DATE: 9th September 2026

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on the use of the Town Council's vehicles.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following a meeting of full Council on the 17 June 2026, Councillor J Quinn requested that a service review be carried out on the Town Council's vehicles and a report be brought to the next meeting of full Council (Minute No **25.26-27** refers).
- 2.2 Ferryhill Town Council owns the following vehicles: -
- MX70 EXF- Citroen Berlingo
 - MW70 MXP- Citroen Berlingo
 - MY68 MYF- Citroen Relay flatbed
 - FY25 YZA- Peugeot Boxer Flatbed
- 2.3 The Council owns all of the above vehicles outright, other than FY25 YZA, which is leased until 2031.
- 2.4 MW68 MYF is used by the Sexton in their daily duties which involves daily work around the Council's various sites. This also includes weekly market duties, visiting the Town Hall to discuss planned burials and market changes, flag duties, football pitch marking and maintenance, collecting materials and supplies and Parish Paths maintenance.
- Additionally, during the summer, most of the day is spent watering flower beds and planters around the town.
- 2.5 MW70 EXF is used daily by the Neighbourhood Manager to respond to issues across the estate, manage staff, and carry out health and safety checks.
- 2.6 FY25 YZA is used daily by the Environment Operatives, the summer seasonal worker, and the student from EDC to complete grounds maintenance across the Town Council's estate. This will often involve working at multiple different sites during any one day, carrying machinery and towing the trailer with ride on grass cutter.
- 2.7 MW70 MXP was previously the Works Supervisor's van. During periods of absence, it was used by the Parks and Maintenance Officer to carry out his duties more efficiently, without needing to use his own car.

- 2.8 The Parks and Maintenance Officer now uses this vehicle multiple times a week while carrying out planned and reactive tasks and repairs across the Town Council estate.

Additional duties include opening and closing sites where contractors are working, and monthly meter readings across all sites. The vehicle is also used in the setting up of events.

The nature of the repairs side to the Parks and Maintenance Officer's role means he will often have to visit a site, assess the repair, go and buy whatever is needed for the repair-Screwfix/Defty's then return to the location to complete the repair. In times where he cannot complete a permanent repair, he will meet the contractor at the site at a later time. All of which would be difficult without the use of a works vehicle.

- 2.9 In the case of reactive repairs it would be difficult to have another member of staff to stop what they are doing, often involving putting machinery back on the van or trailer to pick up the Parks and Maintenance Officer to take him where he needs to be. It would also be an inefficient way of working.

Even with the planned maintenance side of his role, it would hinder other staff not having the use of a van whilst the Parks and Maintenance Officer carried out the work he needed to do.

- 2.10 The Parks and Maintenance Officer is one of two members of staff responsible for responding to call-outs on evenings and weekends and having a vehicle available to use, would ensure more efficient responses to call-outs.

- 2.11 It is not appropriate for the Parks and Maintenance Officer to use his own vehicle for work and he would not be covered in the event of an accident whilst using it for work purposes.

Whilst the Council could investigate paying a mileage allowance, the employee would need to have business insurance cover for their vehicle and they may be unwilling to take out the additional cover. It also needs to be considered that a future employee may not have the use of their own vehicle.

- 2.12 All vehicles, other than MW70 MXP, are in use every day, however it is very difficult to quantify the downtime of this vehicle as usage varies depending upon what tasks are needed and at which sites on any given week.

Records are kept of daily mileage and fuel usage for vehicles, however we have never historically recorded the destinations each vehicle goes to throughout the day.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members note the report.